

Food Insecurity and Hunger

Publicly funded services to address Food Insecurity and Hunger are described in Nutrition Services

Key Findings:

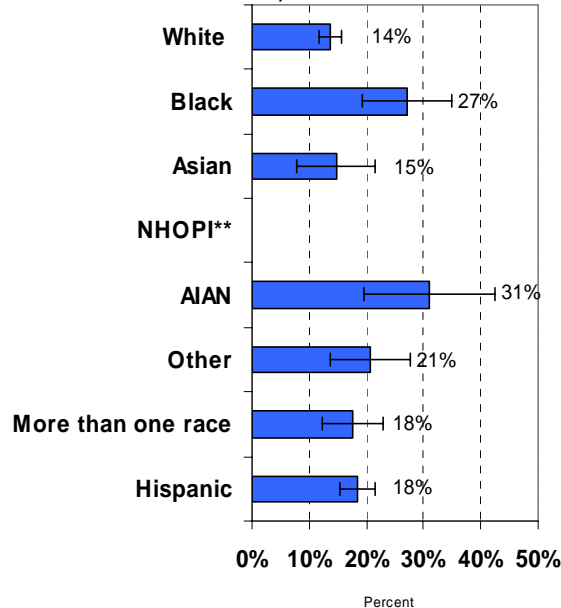
- According to data from the Washington State Population Survey, over the period of 2002-2004, an estimated 11% of Washington's households were food insecure, and an estimated 5% of households were food insecure with hunger, compared to about 11% of US households that were food insecure, and 4% that were food insecure with hunger.¹
- As of November 2004, Washington State ranked 10th highest in the nation for food insecurity with hunger. This is a dramatic improvement from the past (5th from 2000-2002, and 2nd in 1999-2001).^{2,3}
- In Washington, having a low income, being a Non-White race and having children has been strongly associated with food insecurity and hunger. (Data not shown)⁴
- Based on 1995-1999 survey data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Washington women ages 18-44 reported that in the 30 days before the survey, about 7% were concerned about having enough food, 5% skipped meals because there was not enough money to buy food, and 2% went without food for an entire day. More recent data is currently unavailable at the state level. (Data not shown)⁵
- Data are not available on the food security of young children. However, some data on adolescents are available. In the 2004 Washington Healthy Youth Survey, about 15% of 10th grade students reported that their family had reduced or skipped meals in the last 12 months because there was not enough money to buy food.⁴
- Based on 2002-2004 Washington data from the Healthy Youth Survey, Black and American Indian/Alaska Native 10th graders were significantly more likely to report that their family had skipped or reduced meals in the past year due to lack of money than other races.⁴
- Health effects of hunger and food insecurity in children are associated with having more psychosocial problems, frequent colds, ear infections, anemia, asthma, and frequent headaches.^{3,6,7}
- The Healthy People 2010 objective is to increase the prevalence of food security among US households to at least 94 percent of all households. Washington has not yet met this objective.⁸

Definition: Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in a socially acceptable way. Hunger is the uneasy or painful sensation caused by a lack of food, and the recurrent and involuntary lack of access to food.

Race and Ethnicity^{3,a,b}

Family Reduced or Skipped Meals in Last Year Because There Wasn't Enough Money to Buy Food, Grade 10

WA, HYS 2002-2004

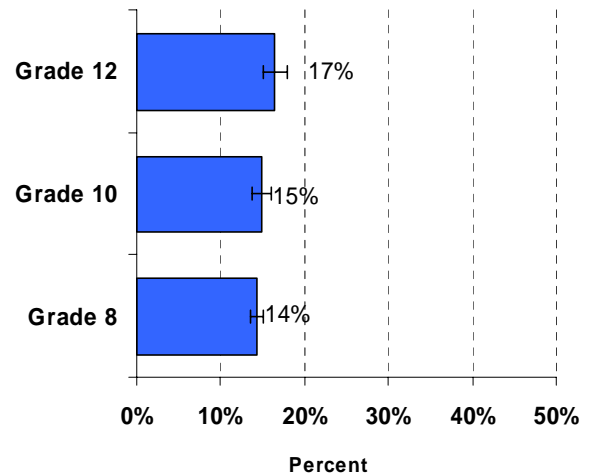


Grade³

Family Reduced or Skipped Meals in Last Year Because There Wasn't Enough Money to Buy Food

By Grade

WA, HYS 2004



*In the Healthy Youth Survey, Hispanic ethnicity is asked in the same question as race. Students are asked to choose one or more races, including Hispanic ethnicity, as appropriate.

** Rates have been suppressed where $n < 15$

Data Sources

1. Washington State Population Survey 2004. Office of Financial Management. Website: <http://www.ofm.wa.gov>. Accessed 2005.
2. Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Washington State. Website: http://www.hmhbwa.org/forprof/education/hunger_food.htm. Accessed 10/05.
3. Sullivan, A., Choi, E. Hunger and Food Insecurity in the Fifty States: 1998-2000. Food Security Institute, Center on Hunger and Poverty, Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University. August 2002. (Updated articles found at: http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/WIN/food_security.asp)
4. Washington State Healthy Youth Survey 2002 and 2004: Online Version. Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Health, Department of Social and Health Services, and Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development and RMC Research Corporation.
5. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), Washington State Department of Health, 1995-1999.
6. Prevalence of Food Insecurity and Hunger, by State, 1996-1998. Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, US Department of Agriculture. Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Report No. 2, Sept 1999. (Updated articles found at: http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/WIN/food_security.asp)
7. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). 2001-2002 Data Release. Website: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhanes/nhanes_01_02/fsq_b_frq.pdf. Released October 2004.
8. Department of Health and Human Services (US). Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health. 2nd edition. Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office; November 2000.

Endnotes

- a. NHOPI – Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- b. AIAN – American Indian/Alaska Native